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MUSK GOES WITH TWITTER POLL, TO SELL TESLA STOCK

Twitter poll with 3.5 million votes backed Elon Musk in drama of selling a 10th of his stock, 58% in favour and 42% against

WAS A MEGA TAX LIABILITY THE TRUE REASON?

Regardless of the poll result, a stock sale may have been inevitable. The mercurial billionaire said the share sale idea was a reaction to a political push to make the ultra-rich pay taxes when prices of stock they hold go up. But analysts say Musk, whose wealth is mostly held in Tesla shares, has $10 billion in taxes coming due to stock options that expire next year

TESLA SHARES SLIDE AFTER POLL RESULT

- At Monday's opening bell, Tesla's stock plunged by 6.4% in the US. Musk is known for rolling markets with ill-advised tweets
- Tesla's market value recently crossed $1 trillion, making Musk, its CEO, the world's richest man as he is the largest shareholder with 17% stock. Musk hasn't disclosed the date of the share sale

$20 bn

ESTIMATED VALUE OF 10 PER CENT OF ELON MUSK'S HOLDINGS IN TESLA

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Bommai govt does U-turn, reconsiders BSY's policies

Cabinet okays rules, sand to get cheaper

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

TO make sand available easily and at a cheaper price, the state cabinet on Monday approved rules and guidelines for the sand policy. Though the policy had been announced by the previous government led by BS Yediyurappa, the guidelines had not been framed. The new rules will allow people to buy the building material online, and also empower panchayats, which can issue permits for sand extraction within their jurisdictions.

After the cabinet meeting, Law and Parliamentary Minister JC Madhu Swamy told the media that the guidelines have been framed for three sources – sand coming from gram panchayat limits, from riverbeds and from the sea. He said, "We have also identified the authorities to give approvals. The government will issue a notification soon."

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>
> JC Madhu Swamy, Law Minister

At gram panchayats, the price of sand has been fixed at Rs 300 per metric tonne (MT), while sand extracted from river beds and supplied to urban areas will be priced at Rs 700 per MT. Mysuru Mines and Minerals Ltd and Hatti Gold Mines have been given the power to extract sand from river beds.

The State government collects 50 per cent of the royalty levied on sand. Of this, half or 25 per cent will be given to panchayats. If required, additional grants from the remaining 25 per cent will be provided to panchayats to develop roads that are damaged due to the transportation of sand.

An authority will be set up to give permission for extracting sand from river beds. It will act as the enforcement and monitoring agency and the guidelines for the new authority will be issued soon, the minister said. CONTINUED ON: P4

CM looking into Jindal land deal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE State Government on Monday informed the Karnataka High Court that a decision taken by the previous government headed by then chief minister BS Yeddyurappa to sell 3,667 acres of land to JSW Steels Corporation Pvt Ltd in Ballari for a low price has not been reaffirmed and the present Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai is looking into it.

The Yediyurappa government had taken the decision following a recommendation by a cabinet sub-committee headed by then Major Industries Minister Jagadish Shettar.

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>
> Karnataka government

Recording the submission made by the government advocate, a division bench of Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi and Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum dismissed a public interest litigation questioning the government's decision, saying it does not survive for consideration.

KA Paul, a resident of BM Layout, had filed the PIL, questioning the decision taken by the government on April 26, 2021 to execute the absolute sale deed for the land at Rs 1.22 lakh per acre in favour of JSW Steels.

After hearing the petition on June 7, 2021, the court had asked the government to produce relevant documents. While doing so, the government stated that the decision was not confirmed at subsequent cabinet meetings. The court had made it clear on June 15, 2021 that any action on the decision will be subject to further orders passed in this petition. On July 13, 2021, it directed the additional government advocate to ask whether a government order can be passed for the sale of government property without approval from the cabinet.

The government informed the court on July 19, 2021 that the state will maintain the status quo.

HONOURING THE ACHIEVERS

(L-R) Clad in the traditional attire of the Halakki community from Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka, eco-warrior Tulasi Gowda walked barefoot up to President Ram Nath Kovind to receive the Padma Shri. In her company was Harekala Hajabba, an orange vendor from Mangaluru who built a school for underprivileged children. Other Padma award recipients were Dr Mollera P Ganesh, renowned hockey player from Kodagu, and Vidushi K S Jayalakshmi, who is joint editor of one of the oldest Sanskrit dailies, Sudharma, published from Mysuru. (Extreme right) PV Sindhu receives the Padma Bhushan | PTI

SC wants non-UP former judge to oversee Kheri investigation

KANU SARDA @ New Delhi

UNHAPPY over the progress of the probe in the Lakhimpur Kheri case in UP, the Supreme Court on Monday suggested appointing a retired judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to monitor it till the filing of chargesheet in the case.

The court sharply remarked that evidence was being collected in a way to protect one accused, indicating there were attempts to let prime accused Ashish Mishra off the hook. The son of a Union minister, he is under arrest for allegedly mowing down four protesting farmers and a journalist.

The UP government has constituted a one-man probe panel headed by a retired Allahabad High Court judge, but the SC bench was not satisfied.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India N V Ramana and justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli expressed concern over possible mixing up of evidence collected in two separate incidents — running over farmers and the consequent lynching of the accused.

"There are two FIRs and evidence collected in one will be used in another.... One set of murders is of farmers, one set is of a journalist and one is of political workers. In the set of political workers, the accused themselves have died. So now witness comes in the third set and gives accused-favouring statement in first case of farmers' death," Justice Kant remarked. He emphasised that the two cases have to be investigated independently. The observation came after the bench perused UP's probe status report.

> **Why mobile of just one accused seized?**
>
> The bench expressed dissatisfaction at the fact that forensic lab reports regarding video evidence have not yet arrived and that the mobile phones of just one of the 12 accused have been seized

Noting that it was not confident about the manner in which evidence was being recorded by the UP Special Investigation Team, the bench said it wanted to appoint former Punjab and Haryana High Court Ranjit Singh or Justice R K Jain to oversee the manner in which statements of witnesses are being recorded.

"We do not want any political overtones and are not confident about the judicial commission set up by you (UP)," the bench told the state government's counsel and senior advocate Harish Salve. It gave them time till Friday to come back with a response in the matter.

RAFALE PROBE

Fake invoices for kickbacks to clinch deal?

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Rafale kickbacks scam took a new turn on Monday with French investigative journal Mediapart claiming that bogus invoices were used by manufacturer Dassault Aviation to funnel at least 7.5 million euros in commissions to a middleman to clinch the fighter jet deal with India.

These payments to Sushen Gupta were reportedly made between 2007 and 2012 during the Congress-led UPA rule at the Centre. Till the time of going to press, there was no reaction to the report from either the defence ministry or Dassault.

Mediapart alleged that both the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate had documents to establish the kickbacks in 2018 but chose to sit on them. "This was in the context of the French firm's long and ultimately successful attempt to secure a 7.8 billion-euro-deal in 2016 to sell 36 of its Rafale fighters to India," it said.

The journal had in July reported the appointment of a French judge to lead the highly sensitive judicial investigation into suspected corruption in the inter-governmental jet deal. In the past, both Dassault and the Indian defence ministry had denied allegations of corruption in the contract. And the Supreme Court in 2019 had dismissed petitions seeking a probe into the charges of kickbacks.

Taking auto? Shell out more from Dec 1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BENGALUREANS will have to shell out more for autorickshaw rides from December 1. The minimum fare will go up to Rs 30 from Rs 25, and the charge per kilometre will be increased from Rs 13 to Rs 15.

Reviewing the fares after eight years, the Regional Transport Authority of Bengaluru Urban District on Saturday approved the rise.

Bengaluru Urban DC J Manjunath, who is also the chairman of the Authority, said, "The decision was taken after several rounds of meetings with office-bearers of various unions of auto-rickshaw drivers, who had requested the authority to increase the fares." P2

Child sex abuse cases on the rise in D-K dist

VINCENT D'SOUZA @Mangaluru

OVER the last seven days, seven cases of sexual abuse against minor girls have been reported in Dakshina Kannada district. In one of the cases, the victim was abused by more than one person, while in another, a two-year-old baby was the target.

In 70-80 per cent of such cases, the predators established contact with the minors through mobile phone or social media, said women and children welfare and police officials.

According to them, sexual abuse cases against minors saw a sharp rise during the Covid pandemic as parents were forced to purchase or give their mobile phones and gadgets to youngsters for online classes. Apart from attending classes from home, a majority of the victims also used the gadgets to open accounts in Facebook, Instagram etc which was misused by some youth and miscreants to establish contact with the victims in the guise of friendship.

Deekshit, who is attached with the Child Helpline, said in some cases, the parents came to know about their daughters being sexually abused only after they became pregnant. The incidents being reported with the police are just a tip of iceberg as many parents hesitate to file police complaints fearing social stigma. Even after the FIR is filed, some victims and their parents want to withdraw cases, apparently due to pressure from the community, he added. CONTINUED ON: P7

Pre-schools open up after 19 months

Bengaluru: Nursery schools and anganwadis opened across the state on Monday after being shut for nearly 19 months due to the Covid pandemic. According to education officials, the response was good on day one. P2

An anganawadi centre welcomes children on Monday | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

EXPRESS READ

Four die in TN, Chennai braces for more rains

Chennai: Four people have died in rain-related mishaps the last 24 hours in Tamil Nadu, as the State struggles to cope with the onslaught of rains. India Meteorological Department on Monday warned that isolated extreme heavy rains (21 cm or more) are likely in Chennai later this week. P7

JAB-O-METER

TAKE YOUR SHOT

November 7: 23,84,096 doses
November 8: 54,10,680 doses
TOTAL DOSES: 100,07,03,865

NATIONWIDE	NOV 7	NOV 8
Fresh cases	10,853	11,451
Recoveries	12,432	13,204
Deaths	526	266

KARNATAKA	NOV 7	NOV 8
Fresh cases	239	283
Recoveries	322	290
Deaths	5	6

4 killed in fratricidal firing at CRPF camp

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan opened fire at the Lingapalli base camp in the strife-torn Sukma district during the wee hours on Monday, killing four men and injuring three others.

Constable Ritesh Ranjan opened indiscriminate fire around 3 am, when about 10 personnel were sleeping inside the barrack that has a capacity of 70-80. The base camp of the CRPF's 50th battalion is about 500 km off Raipur.

"The remaining CRPF men were away on operation. Otherwise the casualties could have been much higher. It seems he was suffering from some psychological distress. A trooper woke him up so that he can attend his duty. But soon after he opened fire from his service weapon on others, most of whom were sleeping. He was then overpowered," a CRPF officer told this newspaper.

Two CRPF men died on the spot and two others died of the bullet injuries while being taken to a hospital.

Two of the three seriously injured jawans were air-lifted to Raipur and the third was taken to Hyderabad. The officer dismissed speculation that Ranjan was enraged because of persistent bullying by other personnel in the camp.

CRPF Director General Kuldiep Singh will arrive in Bastar on Tuesday to take stock of the situation. Senior CRPF officers along with state police have begun a preliminary inquiry after taking Ranjan into custody.

CRPF spokesperson H K Sahu said the injured jawans are out of danger. The reason behind Ranjan's actions is yet to be conclusively ascertained.

The paramilitary force had recently issued a communication to all its formations to identify personnel who are depressed or stressed, and arrange counselling. P9

STONES NOT DEAF

It's rock music at this Gadag temple, visitors go ga ga

A tourist checking out a ringing rock near Itagi of Ron taluk | EXPRESS

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @Gadag

IT is rock music, rather rocks that make music. A piece of stone lying in front of a temple near Itagi town in Gadag district, without attracting much attention for long, is making news now. A video by a tourist tapping the stone to create music has gone viral on social media sites.

Similar stones, which are called lithophonic rocks, have been used in the famous musical pillars of Hampi. They are also found at Neelgund Hills near Mulgund town, Basaveshwar temple near Itagi, Mugali in Ron taluk and Bhimambika temple in Itagi.

With the video going viral, people from Ron, Nargund, Gajendragad and Gadag are thronging the Itagi temple to check the musical notes emanating from the stone.

Village elders call them Gangaalagallu. Gangal means steel or metal plate used for lunch and kallu means stone. When one strikes the stone, it sounds like hitting a metal plate.

Sharanappa Mallapur, a resident of Mugali village, said, "We have seen musical rocks for long. Some elders said these rocks have been lying here for the last 80-90 years. Some sculptors had got them here to make a Basavanna idol, but they stopped after coming to know that they were musical rocks."

Shivalingasarja Desai of Itagi, who works as a biotechnology professor at BVB Engineering College in Hubballi, said, "These stones have rich deposits of iron and other metals, that is the reason they make these sounds. Of course, more studies are needed."